

State Takes Lead in Public Safety

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Commissioner

Indianapolis, (October 28, 2005) - Governor Mitch Daniels, Indiana Department of Correction, Indiana Sheriffs' Association, Indiana State Police and Criminal Justice Institute held a joint press conference today to emphasize the importance of public safety by committing to the launch of the new Sheriffs' Sex Offender Registry in January 2006.

"Among the problems I learned about in the past two years are defects and gaps in our system of keeping track of known sex offenders. We need unification of our efforts, and that is what we will accomplish with this new sex offender registry," said Governor Daniels. "We won't stop working on this problem until we have a system that is absolutely leakproof."

Making sure that children in Indiana are protected is an obvious priority for everyone. The Indiana Sheriffs' Association has been a vigilant steward of the Indiana Sex Offender Registry and recognize the importance of launching this new solution and maintaining it with the support of the Department of Correction. The new registry will be web-based and provide new functionality, including mapping and tracking of sex offenders.

"I am excited to work with Commissioner J. David Donahue and the Department of Correction to enhance the public safety of our youth in this state and in our communities," said Sheriff Leon Allen, President, Indiana Sheriffs' Association.

"We are committed to working hand-in-hand with the Department to make sure that the sex offender registry is an effective tool in promoting the mission of our partnership," added Sheriff Allen. The new

registry will be designed to comply with state and federal requirements, including accurate information on sex offenders. The general public will be able to access information from a single website maintained by the Indiana Sheriffs' Association, instead of multiple sources of information.

"By providing advanced technology solutions and accurate information to the public, law enforcement officials and our partners on the national level, we can move a step closer to tracking predators," said J. David Donahue, Commissioner of Indiana Department of Correction. "We will continue to take an aggressive approach as sex offenders leave the Department by making sure that registration takes place prior to their re-entry into the community," added Donahue. "Access to accurate information in the public sex offender registry is essential for citizens to help identify sex offenders in their neighborhoods."

Detailed information on sex offenders will be provided to the public textually and geographically, including photos of sex offenders. The new mapping tool functionality will enable users to map sex offenders by school, day cares and park locations. The registry may also be searched by city, county or zip code. The search will show a complete profile for the sex offender, including the offender's conviction.

"The Indiana Sheriffs' Association and our 92 Indiana Sheriffs are please to have had the cooperation of Governor Daniels, Indiana Department of Correction, Indiana Criminal Justice Institute, Attorney General's Office and the Indiana State Police. With all of the agencies working together we are satisfied that a more viable site that is user friendly can be developed. It is important that this registry be the best that it can be to ensure the safety of our children and other possible victims," commented Michael Eslinger, Executive Director Indiana Sheriffs' Association.

The site will also be integrated with the National Sex Offender Public Registry (NSOPR), coordinated by the Department of Justice, is a cooperative effort between the state agencies hosting public sex offender registries and the federal government. It can be accessed at www.nsopr.org.

The Indiana Criminal Justice institute will provide funding for the new sex offender registry.

"The ability for Indiana to have a unified effort to protect our children from sex offenders is a tremendous leap in the right direction. The funds provided by CJI will ensure that families can seek out this vital data from one source," said Heather Bolejack, Executive Director of the Indiana Criminal Justice Institute.

The new site address will be www.indianasheriffs.org

About The Department of Correction

The Department employs over 8,000 employees and houses 24,000 adult and juveniles in 32 facilities, ranging from minimum to maximum custody, prison camps, juvenile facilities and work release centers.

The Department's home page on the Internet can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/indcorrection>. The Department's Re-entry Site can be found: <http://www.reentry.in.gov>.